

Claims:

1. A method of designing a colored contact lens having a very natural appearance, comprising:
 - a) recording an image of a cosmetically appealing eye; and
 - b) separating the recorded image into a plurality of component colors and patterns that can be reproduced on a contact lens.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the image is an actual eye or a facsimile of an actual eye.
3. The method of Claim 2, wherein the facsimile of an actual eye is a photograph.
4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the image is created using graphic design means.
5. The method of Claim 4, wherein the graphic design means is selected from the group consisting of a software package, a pencil drawing, an ink drawing, a chalk drawing, a water-color painting, an oil painting, and combinations thereof.
6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the image is a graphically-enhanced facsimile of an actual eye.
7. The method of Claim 6, wherein the image is graphically enhanced using graphic design means.
8. The method of Claim 7, wherein the graphic design means is selected from the group consisting of a software package, a pencil drawing, an ink drawing, a chalk drawing, a water-color painting, an oil painting, and combinations thereof.

- 5 9. The method of Claim 8 wherein when the graphic design means is a software package, the graphical enhancements are achieved by a method selected from the group consisting of painting, airbrushing, halftoning, sharp unmasking, smudging, blurring, defocusing, toning, dodging, sponging, and combinations thereof.
10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of recording the image comprises scanning the image.
11. The method of Claim 10, wherein scanning comprises automatically storing the image in a computer memory.
- 10 12. The method of Claim 11, wherein storing the image in a computer memory comprises using a computer program.
13. The method of Claim 11, further comprising enhancing the recorded image.
- 15 14. The method of Claim 13, wherein enhancing is achieved using a computer program to perform tasks selected from the group consisting of painting, airbrushing, halftoning, sharp unmasking, smudging, blurring, defocusing, toning, dodging, sponging, and combinations thereof.
- 20 15. The method of claim 11 wherein the recorded image comprises elements having a particular density, the method further comprising varying the density of the elements.
16. The method of Claim 11, wherein the step of separating the recorded image comprises using a computer program to divide each component color or associated pattern from each other component color or associated pattern.
- 25 17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the component color comprises a color selected from the group consisting of brown, blue, gray, green, cyan, magenta, yellow, black, violet and hazel.

18. The method of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of component colors consists of four component colors.
19. The method of Claim 18, wherein the four component colors are black, hazel, gray and a color selected from the group consisting of brown, blue and green.
20. The method of Claim 18, wherein the four component colors are printed in the order comprising black, hazel, gray, and either blue, brown or green.
21. The method of Claim 1 further comprising altering at least one of the plurality of component colors.
22. The method of Claim 1 further comprising altering at least one pattern.
23. The method of Claim 1 wherein component color or pattern is reproduced on the contact lens by printing the color or pattern directly onto a contact lens.
24. The method of Claim 1 wherein component color or pattern is reproduced on the contact lens by printing the color or pattern onto a film in a mold used to make contact lens such that when the contact lens is formed in the mold, the film becomes part of the contact lens.
25. A method of manufacturing a colored contact lens having a very natural appearance, comprising:
- a) recording an image of a cosmetically appealing eye;
 - b) separating the recorded image into a plurality of component colors; and
 - c) transferring each of the plurality of component colors onto a contact lens.
26. The method of Claim 25 further comprising altering at least one of the plurality of component colors.

27. The method of Claim 25, wherein transferring comprises:
- a) providing a plurality of clichés for use in the pad printing process, wherein each cliché corresponds to each of the plurality of component colors;
 - b) applying one of a plurality of component color inks to each of the clichés, wherein each of the plurality of component color inks corresponding to each of the plurality of component colors;
 - c) coating a plurality of pads with each of the plurality of component color inks, wherein each of the plurality of pads corresponding to each of the clichés;
 - d) placing each of the plurality of pads in direct contact with a contact lens, such that the contact lens obtains each of the plurality of component color inks, thereby manufacturing a color contact lens having a very natural appearance.

28. The method of Claim 25, wherein transferring comprises:
- a) providing a plurality of clichés for use in the pad printing process, wherein each cliché corresponds to each of the plurality of component colors;
 - b) applying one of a plurality of component color inks to each of the clichés, wherein each of the plurality of component color inks corresponding to each of the plurality of component colors;
 - c) coating a plurality of pads with each of the plurality of component color inks, wherein each of the plurality of pads corresponding to each of the clichés;
 - d) placing each of the plurality of pads in direct contact with a film in a mold such that when a contact lens is formed in the mold, the film becomes part of the contact lens, thereby manufacturing a color contact lens having a very natural appearance.

29. The method of Claim 25, wherein transferring comprises applying each of the plurality of component color inks in a corresponding color design, to

the contact lens, using an ink-jet printer, thereby manufacturing a color contact lens having a very natural appearance.

30. The method of Claim 25, wherein transferring comprises applying each of the plurality of component color inks in a corresponding color design, to the contact lens, using an ink-jet printer, thereby manufacturing a color contact lens having a very natural appearance.

31. The method of Claim 25, wherein transferring comprises printing each of the plurality of component color inks onto a surface in a casting mold, forming the contact lens therein, and removing the contact lens from the mold such that the surface in the casting mold becomes attached to the contact lens before the lens is removed from the mold.

32. A colored contact lens comprising:
a pupil section;
an iris section surrounding the pupil section; and
a colored intermittent pattern made up of a plurality of component colors and designs located over the entire iris section, the pattern covering an effective amount of the iris section to change the apparent color and color pattern of the iris, the pattern comprising: a plurality of component colors, each of the plurality of component colors corresponding to a particular design, each of the plurality of component colors and particular designs corresponding to a component color and particular designs in an actual eye, wherein each of the component colors and particular designs is determined by recording an image of a cosmetically appealing eye, separating the image of the recorded image into the plurality of component colors and particular designs, and transferring the plurality of component colors and particular designs to a contact lens, thereby creating a contact lens having a very natural appearance.

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- 33. The lens of Claim 32 wherein from about 0.1% to about 20% of a person's natural iris color shows through the lens.
 - 34. The lens of Claim 32 wherein from about 21% to about 50% of a person's natural iris color shows through the lens.
 - 35. The lens of Claim 32 wherein from about 51% to about 75% of a person's natural iris color shows through the lens.
 - 36. The lens of Claim 32 wherein from about 76% to about 99% of a person's natural iris color shows through the lens.

FOOTNOTES